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Senator Lodge

Past and Present

By

Hon. Daniel F. Cohalan

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"Future generations will decide whether the Senator really expressed his views in the historic contest against the League of Nations or in the Washington Conference from which he emerges the protagonist of the Four-Power Pact, the so-called Limitations of Armament Treaty, the Chinese Nine-Power Treaty and the other compacts with imperialism that bind us on lines against which Washington warned us on so many occasions."

Senator Lodge—Past and Present

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*"My desire is * * * that mine adversary had written a book."*
Job xxxi: 35.

IN the great fight against the League of Nations, few men stood out more courageously against open attack and insidious wiles than the distinguished senior Senator from Massachusetts. As Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate, he was made the target upon which were dulled the weapons of most of those who sought to draw us away from the great policies that had made us secure from foreign attacks and domestic intrigue.

At the head of a splendid body of men, he fought a long drawn out, tiring, irritating campaign; marshalled his forces with consummate skill; and emerged a victor in the greatest parliamentary contest in the history of our country. He was abused during the campaign, as probably no other senator was, but in the end, he triumphed. It seemed as though he had won for himself one of the great places in our history. But one cry persisted, even after the shouting had died away, and that was the bitter, insistent taunt of his adversaries that he had been animated throughout, not by patriotism, but by a blind devotion to partisan ends. His enemies were powerless to prove their claim to be justified. His friends, including the hundreds of thousands of his countrymen who had been won for him in this fight for American ideals, indignantly denied the charge. The cry, however, never ceased.

Can it be that his actions in the Washington conference have proved the truth of the charge levelled at him? How can he reconcile his position then, and his advocacy of the proposed treaties just sent to the Senate, with his actions and arguments of the recent past?

Much may be pardoned to the exigencies of party and to the change in position made by a man who has now to carry the responsibilities of power, but how can he explain away his considered judgment and his settled convictions of other years, as

written into his "George Washington?" Extracts and opinions therein expressed are the strongest proof that can be brought against either the patriotism or the statesmanship of his present position. The volumes on Washington, as written by Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, and published by Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, in the "American Statesman Series," were copyrighted by him in 1889 and again in 1917. They are the material from which future generations will decide whether the Senator really expressed his views, in the historic contest against the League of Nations with its entanglements, from which he helped us to escape, or in the Washington conference from which he emerges as the protagonist of the Four Power Pact, the so-called Limitation of Armament Treaty, the Chinese Nine Power Treaty and the other compacts with imperialism that bind us hand and foot on lines against which Washington warned us on so many occasions.

The American Viewpoint.

Let us examine Senator Lodge's "George Washington," and bring before the light of day, not things said of Mr. Lodge by his enemies, but by Mr. Lodge, for and by himself. Mr. Lodge wrote this book, it is true, before he became a member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate and long before he became a convert to the policy of an alliance with royalty.

Strange to say, in that day (1889) he devoted a chapter of Volume II, to a study of "Foreign Relations" from an American viewpoint—from the viewpoint of Washington. As he calmly viewed the history of our country, and marveled at the strength of the rock upon which it was founded, Mr. Lodge said:

"Our relations with foreign nations today fill but a slight place in American politics, and excite generally only a languid interest. We have separated ourselves so completely from the affairs of other people that it is difficult to realize how large a place they occupied when the government was founded." (Page 129).

He wrote this, however, before the Rt. Honorable Arthur J. Balfour, Sir Auckland Geddes, et al., renewed the attempt to reduce this Republic to the status of a British colony. He pointed out how difficult it was, when this country was overrun with Tories, (to whom Washington referred as "execrable parricides" and "abominable pests of society"), to make the people realize that they were really a free and independent nation, although Washington continued to force the thought home. Said Mr. Lodge:

"Within fifteen years we had been colonies, and all our politics, except those which were purely local and provincial, had been the politics of Europe; for during the eighteenth century we had been drawn into and had played a part in every European complication, and every European war in which England has the slightest share. Thus the American people came to consider themselves a part of the European system and looked to Europe for their politics, which was a habit of thought that was both natural and congenial to colonists. We ceased to be colonists when the Treaty of Paris was signed; but treaties, although they settle boundaries and divide nations, do not change customs and habits of thought by a few strokes of the pen. The free and independent people of the United States, as there has already been occasion to point out, when they set out to govern themselves under their new Constitution, were still dominated by colonial ideas and prejudices. * * * What our actual relations with other nations should be, was something wholly vague, and very varying ideas were entertained about it by communities and by individuals, according to their various prejudices, opinions and interests. * * * The one idea, however, that the American people did not have on this subject was, that they should hold themselves entirely aloof from the old world, and have with other nations no relations except those born of commerce. It had not occurred to them that they should march steadily forward on a course which would drive out European governments, and would sever their connection with the North American continent. After a century's familiarity, this policy looks so simple and obvious that it is difficult to believe that our forefathers could even have considered any other seriously; but in 1789 it was so strange that no one dreamed of it, except perhaps a few thinkers speculating on the future of the infant nation. It was something so novel that when it was proposed it struck the people like a sudden shock of electricity. It was so broad, so national, so thoroughly American, that men still struggling in the fetters of colonial thought could not comprehend it. But there was one man to whom it was neither strange nor speculative. To Washington it was not a vague idea, but a well-defined system, which he had been long maturing in his mind." (Pages 129-131.)

Into Every European War.

The charge has frequently been made, in recent years, that it is the aim of Great Britain to make the United States of America, a colony once again, and to undo the work of the Revolution. Mr.

Lodge paints an eloquent picture of the United States, fifteen years after its independence was wrested from the Empire. He calls attention to the fact that the people were so accustomed to being drawn into "every European complication and every European war in which England had the slightest share," that they began to feel that they were, in reality, a part of Europe.

Are not the treaties which Mr. Lodge now sponsors, another attempt to reproduce this condition? Is it not the hope of England, that once we begin to play a part "in every European complication and in every European war in which England has the slightest share," that we, too, will forget that we are a free and independent nation, and not having a Washington to lead us, will fall again into the trap so nicely baited by British diplomats, assisted by weak-kneed Americans, brothers in spirit of the men into whom Washington had to labor to instil the spirit of independence?

Washington or Lodge.

Washington never believed that this country, once established, was a part of Britain, or that it owed anything to that Empire. Mr. Lodge writes of the Father of our country: "Before he had been chosen President, he wrote to Sir Edward Newenham: 'I hope the United States of America will be able to keep disengaged from the labyrinth of European politics and wars; and that before long they will, by the adoption of a good national government, have become respectable in the eyes of the world, so that none of the maritime powers, especially none of those who hold possessions in the New World or the West Indies, shall presume to treat them with insult or contempt. It should be the policy of the United States to administer to their wants without being engaged in their quarrels. And it is not in the power of the proudest and most polite people on earth to prevent us from becoming a great, a respectable, and a commercial nation if we shall continue united and faithful to ourselves.' This plain statement showed his fixed belief that in an absolute breaking with the political affairs of other peoples lay the most important part of the work which was to make us a nation in spirit and in truth." (Pages 131-132).

Would Senator Lodge now have us believe that he has risen, superior to Washington, to guide us away from that "absolute breaking point" with Europe, and to bring us again, into "every European war" in which England will have a share? Or would Mr. Lodge have us believe that he fitly summed up the situation, when he wrote of Washington: "No man lived more loyal than he, or

more true to the duties of gratitude; but he looked upon the world of facts with vision never dimmed nor dazzled, and watched it in silence, while others slept and dreamed." (Page 137.) The British diplomats, at the Washington conference, evidently "dazzled the vision" of America's chosen spokesmen, who "slept and dreamed" while Balfour wove the net into which America was to be delivered—a colony once again!

When Senator Lodge wrote his "Life of Washington," he had no doubt of the wisdom of the action of steering the American bark clear of foreign craft. He said: "In July, 1791, he (Washington) wrote to Morris: 'I trust we shall never so far lose sight of our own interest and happiness as to become unnecessarily a party to these political disputes. Our local situation enables us to maintain that state with respect to them which otherwise could not, perhaps, be preserved by human wisdom.' He followed this up with a strong and concise argument as to the advantage and necessity of this policy, showing a complete grasp of the subject which came from long and patient thought." (Page 140).

Clear and Well Defined.

Senator Lodge takes care to point out to the reader of his interesting volumes that the policy of keeping aloof from all foreign alliance was not born with the proclamation of neutrality, but came into being when the first President took hold of the reigns of government. He makes this clear, when he writes: "The policy of separating the United States from all foreign politics is usually dated from what is called the neutrality proclamation; but the theory, as has been pointed out, was clear and well defined in Washington's mind when he entered upon the presidency. * * * A few extracts from his letters will show the completeness of his policy and the firmness with which he followed it whenever occasion came. * * * Washington (seeing trouble ahead in France decided that) * * * England, if possible, was to be made to understand that the American policy was not dictated by anything but the interests and the dignity of the United States, and their resolve to hold aloof from European complications. In June, 1792, he wrote to Morris: 'One thing, however, I must not pass over in silence, lest you should infer from it that Mr. D. had authority for reporting that the United States had asked the mediation of Great Britain to bring about a peace between them and the Indians. * * * You may be fully assured, sir, that such mediation never was asked, that the asking of it never was in con-

temptation, and I think I might go further and say that it not only never will be asked, but would be rejected if offered. The United States will never have occasion, I hope, to ask for the interposition of that power, or any other, to establish peace within their own territory.' Here is again the same note, always so true and clear, that the United States are not colonies but an independent nation. * * * It was a fact not understod at home and not recognized abroad, but Washington proposed to insist upon it so far as in him lay, until it was both understood and admitted." (Pages 141-143).

Has anything occurred since the time of Washington, to cause the American people to alter their opinion in this regard? Has the United States any "territorial possessions now or hereafter to be acquired," for help to hold which they must appeal for aid to Europe, to Great Britain, to Japan or to France? Is it possible to conceive, in a vision not "dazzled" by European diplomacy, of a situation in which the United States would have to appeal to Europe for help in maintaining peace on our shores? Surely, such a condition is impossible, save in the minds of those representatives of America who prefer to "sleep and dream," while the enemies of democracy are awake and at work!

Thought Only of the United States.

Dealing with the proclamation of neutrality, and with the war between France and Great Britain, Mr. Lodge wrote: "When the moment came, the policy long meditated and matured was in force. The world was told that a new power had come into being, which meant to hold aloof from Europe, and which took no interest in the balance of power or the fate of dynasties, but looked only to the welfare of its own people and to the conquest and mastery of a continent as its allotted task. The policy declared by the proclamation was purely American in its conception, and severed the colonial tradition at a stroke. * * * For twenty-five years afterward the American people slowly advanced toward the ground then taken, until the ideas of the neutrality proclamation received their final acceptance and extension at the hands of the younger Adams, in the promulgation of the Monroe doctrine. The shaping of this policy which was then launched was a great work of far-sighted and native statesmanship, and it was pre-eminently the work of the President himself." (Page 145).

Is Mr. Lodge now ready to tell the world that the great power that came into being with Washington, died with the advent of Harding? That the nation is now "concerned with the balance of

power and fate of dynasties" and no longer looks "only to the welfare of its own people and to the conquest and mastery of a continent as its allotted task?"

How history does repeat itself! Mr. Lodge declares that a Secretary of State, in other days, was more interested in the affairs of another country, than he was in the affairs of his own. "Jefferson," he says, "either from timidity or from a very unworthy preference for another nation's interest to the dignity of his own country," had acted contrary to the principles of Washington: "The Secretary of State had not been considering the affair from an American standpoint" (the case of the "Little Sarah"), but "Washington had what Jefferson seems to have totally lost at this juncture—a keen national feeling, and it was touched to the quick. The truth was, that in all this business, Jefferson was thinking too much of France and the cause of human liberty in Paris, while Washington thought of the United States alone." (Page 154).

Wise and Dignified Neutrality.

Is it not indeed time for the present servants of the people, who are in high places, to lead us back from the debauch of sentimentalism in which we have been indulging for some time past and make us realize once more that we can best contribute to the welfare of mankind and to the progress of the world by preserving our own interests and minding well our own business? We are told now that we have entered upon a new era and though we are the most formidable industrial competitor of England, we never can have war with her. She will not press any selfish interest as against us. How delightfully naive! How clearly on another occasion Washington pointed out "but it is a maxim, founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its own interest; and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it." (Vol. I, Page 248).

It was with difficulty, says Mr. Lodge, that Washington impressed the importance of a "wise and dignified neutrality" upon the people, so recently released from the subservient chains of an Empire. "To develop a policy of wise and dignified neutrality," wrote Mr. Lodge, "and to impress it upon the people, was a great enough task in itself. But Washington was obliged to impress it also upon his own people, and to teach them that they must have a policy of their own toward other nations. He had to carry this through in the teeth of an opposition so utterly colonial that it

could not grasp the idea of having any policy but that which, from sympathy or hate, they took from foreigners." (Page 160).

Crooked Politics.

The "crooked politics" of Europe never faded from the mind of Washington. "A little more than a year after he came to the presidency, he wrote to Lafayette: 'Gradually recovering from the distresses in which the war left us, patiently advancing in our task of civil government, unentangled in the crooked politics of Europe, wanting scarcely anything but the free navigation of the Mississippi, which we must have, and as certainly shall have, if we remain a nation.' Time and peace, sufficient for the upbuilding of the nation, that is the theme everywhere. Yet he knew that a sacrifice of everything for peace was the surest road to war and ruin." (Page 162).

England Disliked Us.

Mr. Lodge comments on the favorable treaty made with Spain, by Thomas Pinckney in 1794, but adds, rather ironically, it would seems, in the light of his latter day attitude: "There was, however, another nation out on our western and northern border more difficult to deal with than Spain; and in this quarter there was less evasion and delay, but more arrogance and bad temper. It was to England that Washington turned first when he took the presidency, and it was in her control of the western posts and her influence among the Indian tribes that he saw the greatest dangers to the continental movement of our people." (Page 166). Mr. Lodge explains that with the arrival of George Hammond, minister from England, about the time of the appearance of Genet, the French minister, began "the long series of mistakes made by Great Britain in her dealings with the United States. But Hammond and the English ministry could not see the full scope of the neutrality policy in its national meeting, and they very naturally failed to perceive that it marked the rise of a new power wholly disconnected from Europe, to which their own views were confined. * * * They saw Washington adopt and carry out a policy of dignified impartiality. * * * The remembrance of old injuries and of the war for independence were still fresh, and the hatred of England was well nigh universal in the United States." (Page 168).

The United States of America, not then being a rich country, or holding the promise of becoming a powerful ally, British ministers did not court the favor of our representatives. Indeed, Mr. Lodge is authority for the statement that Mr. Hammond, the

British minister of that day, assumed "a disagreeable tone with a strong flavor of bullying," which perturbed Washington not at all. Says Mr. Lodge: "When from a sense of national dignity and of fair dealing, the United States stood apart from the conflict and placed their former foe on the same footing as their friend and ancient ally (France) a very small allowance of good sense would have led the British ministry to encourage them in so doing. By favorable treatment, and by a friendly and conciliatory policy, they should have helped Washington in his struggle against popular prejudices, and endeavored by so doing to keep the United States neutral, and lead them, if possible, to their side; but with a fatuity almost incomprehensible, they pursued an almost opposite course.

Our Vessels Seized.

By similar conduct England had brought on the war for independence, which ended in the division of her empire. In precisely the same way she now proceeded to make it as arduous as possible for Washington to maintain neutrality, and thereby played directly into the hands of the party that supported France. The true policy demanded no sacrifices on the part of Great Britain. Civility and consideration in her dealings, and a careful abstention from wanton aggression and insult, were all-sufficient. But England disliked us. * * * She did not wish us to thrive and prosper, and she knew that we were weak and not in a position to enter upon an offensive war." (Pages 169-170). Thus did Mr. Lodge correctly describe the attitude of England toward America, and the description fits her as well in 1922 as it did in 1776 or in 1794, the only difference being that we were then an infant nation, which England was anxious to destroy; today, we are a powerful nation, and she would do by diplomacy and the wiles of state-craft, what she could not do on the field of battle—destroy us as a nation, and make us a colony, dependent once again upon her.

There was a time when we had no navy "with which to retaliate" upon England, and Mr. Lodge writes of this day: "On November 6, 1793, a British order in council was passed, but not immediately published, directing the seizure of all vessels carrying the produce of the French Islands, or loaded with provisions for the use of the French colonies. The object of the order was to destroy all neutral trade, and it was aimed particularly at the commerce of the United States. * * * Our merchantmen and traders had been quick to take advantage of the opening of the French ports, and they had gone in swarms to the French Islands.

Now, without a word of warning, their vessels were seized by the cruisers of a nation with which we were suposed to be at peace. Every petty governor of an English island sat as a judge in admiralty. Many of them were corrupt, all were unfit for duty, and our vessels were condemned and pillaged. The crews were made prisoners, and in many cases, thrown into loathsome and unhealthy places of confinement, while the ships were left to rot in the harbors. The tale of the outrages and miseries thus inflicted on citizens of the United States without any warning, and by a nation considered to be at peace with us, fills an American with shame and anger, even today. If our people remonstrated, they were told that England meant to have no neutrals, and that six of their frigates could blockade our coast. * * * The truth was that we were weak, and this was not only a misfortune but apparently an unpardonable sin. England could not conquer us, but she could harry our coasts, and let loose her Indians on our borders; and we had no navy with which to retaliate." (Pages 171-172).

Interests Preserved by Falsehood.

What a pity that the members of the American delegation at the Washington conference, did not have the opportunity to read Mr. Lodge's opinion of Britain, before the star chamber session from which came forth the mysterious four-power pact! Mr. Lodge not only calls attention to the real love England has ever held for America, but also calls attention to the fact that, when cornered, her statesmen do not hesitate to forsake truth, if by that method they can bolster up the interests of their country.

Commenting upon the war-like attitude of a supposedly friendly nation, Mr. Lodge writes: "About the same time (that our commerce was being destroyed) a speech was reported from Quebec, in which Lord Dorchester told the Indians that they should soon take the war-path for England against the United States. Lord Grenville denied in Parliament, and subsequently to Jay, that the ministry had ever taken any step to incite the Indians against the United States, and the authenticity of Lord Dorchester's utterances had been questioned in later days; but it was not disavowed at the time, even by Hammond, in a sharp correspondence which he held on that and other topics with Randolph. This speech was probably made, even if it was not authorized, and it was certainly universally accepted at the moment as both true and authoritative." (Pages 172-173).

Washington had no doubt about the attitude of England toward the United States, and though he saw Chief Justice John Jay depart for London, on a treaty-making mission, he was filled with many misgivings, and "the act of sending such a mission at all was very trying to him," writes Mr. Lodge, "for the conduct of England galled him to the quick. He had long suspected Great Britain, as well as Spain, of inciting the Indians secretly to assail our settlements, and knowing as he did the character of savage warfare, and feeling deeply the bloodshed and expense of our Indian wars, he cherished a profound dislike for those who could be capable of promoting such misery to the injury of a friendly and civilized nation. As England became more and more hostile, he made up his mind that she was bent on attacking us and in March, 1794, he wrote to Governor Clinton that he had no doubt as to the authenticity of Lord Dorchester's speech, and that he believed England intended war." (Page 175).

Agents of Great Britain.

"Washington wrote to Jay: 'There does not remain a doubt in the mind of any well informed person in this country, not shut against conviction, that all the difficulties we encounter with the Indians, their hostilities, the murder of helpless women and innocent children along our frontiers, result from the conduct of the agents of Great Britain in this country." (Page 176).

Discussing the success of the Jay mission, Mr. Lodge recounts the fact that he was well received in England, and that Lord Grenville expressed "the most friendly feelings, and every desire that the negotiations might succeed"—even as Balfour in 1922. "Jay was also received at court, where he was said to have kissed the queen's hand, a crime, so the opposition declared, for which his lips ought to be blistered to the bone." But, adds Mr. Lodge, innocently unmindful of the part he was to play in the program of 1922, "Receptions, dinner parties, and a ready welcome every where, did not, however, make a treaty. When it came to business (even as in 1922) the English did not differ materially from their neighbors whom Canning satirized:

'The fault of the Dutch
Is giving too little and asking too much.'" (Pages 176-177).

Mr. Lodge concludes his interesting discussion of "Foreign Relations," in the early days of our history, with some rather caustic comment on the question of the impressment of British seamen, real or pretended, from American ships. He writes:

"The right of search and the right of impressment were simply the rights of the powerful (England) over the weak (United States). * * * when we should be ready and willing to fight we could settle that question. In due time, we were ready to fight. England defeated us in various battles, ravaged our coasts, and burned our capital; while we whipped her frigates and lake flotillas and repulsed her Peninsula veterans with heavy slaughter at New Orleans. Impressment was not mentioned in the treaty which concluded that war, but it ended at that time. The English are a brave and combative people, but rather than get into wars with nations that will fight, and fight hard, they will desist from wanton and illegal aggressions, in which they do not differ greatly from the rest of mankind; and so the practical abandonment of impressment came with the war of 1812. The fact was officially stated by Webster, not many years later, when he announced that the Flag covered and protected all those who lived or traded under it." (Page 178).

Might Against Right.

There are many Americans who will not agree with Senator Lodge that the United States would ever stoop to imitate the acts of Great Britain which he so carefully describes, sugar coating them with the declaration that in this regard, England "does not differ greatly from the rest of mankind," nor will they agree with the scholarly Senator from Massachusetts that "most people accept the inevitable when the deed is done." (Page 195).

The American people, true to the spirit instilled into the nation by Washington and the founders of this Republic, will never accept as "inevitable" the treaties for which Senator Lodge is now chief spokesman, and which aim to do today what England has hitherto not been able to do, all through our history—to reduce us to a position of admitted partnership with, and inferiority to her. Washington and the men of his generation, not only won the independence of our country, but laid down the policies which make easy, its preservation and security. We shall indeed be "degenerate sons of worthy sires," if we permit the blandishments of power or the intrigues of self-seekers to take from us that liberty which it is our interest to preserve for ourselves and our glory to hand down unsullied to our children.

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